

**Jonathan Boucher to George Washington, June 13,
1768, Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers.
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FROM THE REV. JONATHAN BOUCHER.¹

CAROLINE, June 13th. 1768.

SIR

I think myself much obliged to You for the flattering Preference given Me, in thinking Me a proper person to undertake the Direction of Master Custis's Education. And I will not hesitate to confess to You, that it wou'd mortify Me not a little to be deprived of so acceptable an Opportunity of obtaining some Credit to myself: which I flatter myself there wou'd be no Danger of, from so promising a Youth. — Yet I am under a Necessity of informing You of a Circumstance in my affairs which may probably lead You to look out for another Tutor for your Ward. — Preferments in the Church in Virginia are so extremely scanty, that I have for some time been endeavouring to establish an Interest in Maryland, where, I doubt not but You know, the Livings are much better. I happened to be in Annapolis, chiefly upon this Business, at the Time your Letter reach'd this Place: and tho' I have already met with two Disappointments, yet, I have received fresh Promises that I shall now soon be provided for. If This happens at all, as I have all ye Reason in ye World to believe that it will, the Parish I expect is That of Annaps., where also I propose to continue superintending the Education of a few Boys.

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Now, Sir, it will be necessary for You to consider, whether in Case such a Change shd. take Place, it wd. be agreeable to You that Mastr. Custis shou'd accompany Me thither: for, otherwise I can hardly suppose You will think it worth his While to come down hither, probably, for a few Months only. For my Part, I cannot help imagining that You will think Annaps. a more eligible Situation, as it is, I believe, rather more convenient to You, & a Post Town from whence You might have Letters, if necessary, every Week to Alexandria. But This is a matter on which You alone ought to judge, & in which perhaps it becomes not Me to give my Opinion. All I have to add, is, that shd. You resolve, at all Events, to trust the young Gentleman to my Care, either Here or in Maryland, I will exert my best Endeavours to render him worthy of Yours, & his Family's Expectations. And as He is now, as You justly observe, losing Time, wou'd it be amiss to send Him down immediately, if it were only upon Tryal, as I presume He has never yet been remov'd from under the Wing of his Parents: You will then, from his own Reports of Me, & my Management of my Pupils, be better able to judge of the Propriety of continuing Him with Me. And tho' it be usual for Boys to find their own Beds, in this Case, that wou'd be unnecessary: I will furnish Him for the little Time He will have to stay before I know what my Destiny is to be. As to Terms &c, these may be sett'd hereafter: all I shall now say of Them is, that, from what I have heard of Collo. Washington's Character, They are such as I am well convinc'd He will not think unreasonable.

I have been under much Concern that it was not sooner in my Power to acknowledge the Rect. of yr. obliging Letter: this is forwarded by a Servt. of Mr. Addison's, whom I have requested to send it over to Alexandria, by wc. means I hope You will receive it sooner than by Post.

I am, very respectfully, Sir, Yr. most Obedient, & most Hble Servt. JONAN. BOUCHER

1 Jonathan Boucher was born in England, March 12, 1738. In early youth he came to America as tutor to the sons of a Virginia planter, and in 1762 entered the Anglican ministry. He seems, however, to have had an especial fondness for his early profession, as he continued to practice it after taking orders, and carried on a boarding-school of from thirty to forty boys. John Parke Custis became his pupil in 1768, at fourteen years of age, and remained under his charge for several years. Dr. Boucher was an avowed loyalist, and so offensive were his

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tenets to the colonists that in 1775 he was obliged to return to England, where he was appointed vicar of Epsom. He died there April 27, 1804.